

Fruit marketer and distributor Oppy has announced a new grape program building on its exclusive partnership with Ocean Spray, the agricultural cooperative owned by more than 700 farmer families.

The fruit comes from the Southern Hemisphere, which expands Oppy's footprint, offering retailers a powerful 12-month consumer brand for the grape category from Peru, Chile and Brazil as well as South Africa, Mexico and California.

Oppy's overall program is well balanced across several global growing regions and a wide range of proprietary varieties.

Ocean Spray grapes are offered in a variety of packaging options, including high-graphic bags as well as 2 lb. and 3 lb. clamshells. Promotional volumes are available through February to support various retailer needs.

"Oppy's grape program continues to evolve in exciting ways to meet the market demand," Oppy's Director of Import Grapes and Stone Fruit Bill Poulos said.

"Our program is incredibly varied and comprises a mixture of new, exciting varieties that help attract new consumers, as well as tried and trusted favorites that are always a hit. Now offered under the immediately familiar and top-quality Ocean Spray® brand, our customers can truly refresh and reenergize their grape category."

Import grapes continue to deliver healthy results, with 2020 volume increasing by 6% over 2019 in their January-May season, despite overall unpredictability across markets.

Since the U.S. is the top market by volume for grapes from Peru, where Oppy has recently broadened its decades-long presence, the 162-year-old fresh produce company will also offer its first-ever organic Fair Trade Certified green and red seedless grapes, in keeping with growing consumer demand for produce that helps communities as well as the environment.

A Fair Trade partner since 2004, the program's premiums go toward supporting essential infrastructure in grower communities including healthcare, education, fresh water access and more.

The workers who produce Fair Trade Certified produce determine the allocation of premiums, thus empowering communities toward sustainable development. Oppy's sales of Fair Trade grapes have already experienced meteoric growth, increasing by 137% from the first half of 2018 to the first half of 2019.

Combined with its offerings from Chile, where Oppy enjoys decades of on-the-ground expertise, promotable grape volumes are expected this season, allowing for greater choice and flexibility at retail.

Earlier this year, Oppy further developed its grape offerings by becoming the first-ever importer of the organic green seedless Arra 15 variety from Peru, continuing to chart new avenues of growth for the category